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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 2, 11, and 12 without prejudice or disclaimer, amend claim 1, and add new claims 13-16, as follows:

Listing of claims:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A polymer composite ~~formed from a three dimensional network structure~~ comprising:

an organic polymer (A) comprising either a polymer produced from a water soluble (meth)acrylate ester (a), or a copolymer [[of]] produced from a water soluble (meth)acrylate ester (a) and at least one compound selected from a group consisting of (meth)acrylamide and N-substituted (meth)acrylamides (b); and

a water swelling clay mineral (B);

wherein the organic polymer (A) and the water swelling clay mineral (B) interact to form a three dimensional network structure.

Claim 2 (Canceled)

Claim 3 (Original): A polymer composite according to claim 1, wherein a glass transition temperature of said organic polymer (A) is no more than 100°C.

Claim 4 (Original): A polymer composite according to claim 1, wherein a weight ratio of said water swelling clay mineral (B) / said organic polymer (A) within said polymer composite is within a range from 0.003 to 3.

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Claim 5 (Original): A polymer composite according to claim 1, wherein said water soluble (meth)acrylate ester (a), and said (meth)acrylamide and N-substituted (meth)acrylamides (b) are soluble in either water or a mixed solvent of water and an organic solvent.

Claim 6 (Original): A polymer composite according to claim 1, wherein said water soluble (meth)acrylate ester (a) is at least one compound selected from a group consisting of methoxyethyl acrylate, ethoxyethyl acrylate, methoxyethyl methacrylate and ethoxyethyl methacrylate.

Claim 7 (Original): A polymer composite according to claim 1, wherein said organic polymer (A) is a copolymer of a water soluble (meth)acrylate ester (a) and at least one compound selected from a group consisting of (meth)acrylamide and N-substituted (meth)acrylamides (b), and a molar ratio of (b)/(a) within said copolymer is no more than 1.

Claim 8 (Original): A polymer composite according to claim 1, wherein a tensile strength of said polymer composite is at least 500 kPa, a tensile breaking elongation is at least 200%, and an elastic modulus at a tensile elongation of 100% is at least 50 kPa.

Claim 9 (Original): A stretched product of a polymer composite produced by stretching a polymer composite according to any one of claim 1 through claim 8.

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Claim 10 (Original): A stretched product of a polymer composite according to claim 9, wherein a tensile strength of said stretched product is at least 1000 kPa, a tensile breaking elongation is at least 200%, and an elastic modulus at a tensile elongation of 100% is at least 100 kPa.

Claim 11 (Canceled)

Claim 12 (Canceled)

Claim 13 (New): A polymer composite according to claim 1, wherein the three dimensional network structure is obtained by a process comprising:

dispersing the water swelling clay mineral (B) in an uniform solution comprising the water soluble (meth)acrylate ester (a), and either water or a mixed solvent of water and an organic solvent; and

polymerizing the water soluble (meth)acrylate ester (a) with a polymerization initiator.

Claim 14 (New): A polymer composite according to claim 1, wherein the three dimensional network structure is obtained by a process comprising:

dispersing the water swelling clay mineral (B) in an uniform solution comprising the water soluble (meth)acrylate ester (a) and at least one compound selected from the group consisting of (meth)acrylamide and N-substituted (meth)acrylamides (b), and either water or a mixed solvent of water and an organic solvent; and

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polymerizing the water soluble (meth)acrylate ester (a) and at least one compound selected from the group consisting of (meth)acrylamide and N-substituted (meth)acrylamides (b) with a polymerization initiator.

Claim 15 (New): A polymer according to claim 13 or 14, wherein the polymerization initiator proceeds in a stand state.

Claim 16 (New): A polymer according to claim 13 or 14, wherein the polymerization proceeds without use of an organic cross linking agent.

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